



# CANNABIS & MODERN SLAVERY: A NEW COMMODITY RIPE FOR EXPLOITATION?

On November 25th, co-founders of Canada's Cannabis Education Guild (CEG), Kelly Beker and Jenn Larry spoke at Oxford University's Bonavero Institute of Human Rights Faculty of Law. Carrying a host of experience in commercialization strategy and execution across North America's cannabis industry, alongside educational efforts in Asia, CEG is poised to lead discourse around cannabis and the critical opportunity it brings for a change in human rights. Moderated by industry peer, Jessica Steinberg, global cannabis consultant and policy expert, this talk about Slavery and Cannabis was the first of its kind to be presented at Oxford, igniting great interest in a new commodity ripe for exploitation.



Momentum surrounding cannabis legalization is currently the highest it has ever been. Besides the sheer economic growth probabilities witnessed and projected across North America's commercial and medical frameworks, cannabis has become subjected to a rush of investment and engagement from a variety of global sectors and nation-states. Deeply historical, cultural, and political: the story of cannabis legalization is one of rich purpose and means of social justice. Cannabis legalization can highlight the disruption possible across consumer packaged goods, energy, and textile industries. Beyond this, unlocking value through global trade and supply chains will become inevitable in the sector's global expansion and the segmentation already seen. With a "War on Drugs" serving as a harsh backdrop to this burgeoning commodity, CEG discussed how the process from legalization to commercialization will present heightened risk for labour exploitation as criminalized legacy markets, varying industries, and diverse economies rush to join legal frameworks.

CEG presented their ultimate vision of not only creating a slavery and human trafficking-free cannabis industry, but of leveraging the sector's infancy to make time-sensitive change, and set precedent for supply chain transparency, accountability, and chain of custody responsibility at large. Supporting their vision is a mission to work strategically in aligning market forces to advocate for preventative action, and a sector-based approach to policy-change.

Joining the CEG's movement towards a slavery-free cannabis industry, enables a broader force in supporting and affording voices to those most vulnerable, while developing mechanisms for responsible and traceable supply chain policies. With 20% of their net profits, CEG has developed multiple social good initiatives, from boots on the ground community outreach and vulnerable labour market education in Thailand, to the development of a case for change to submit to the government of Canada and the UN. Additionally, to help streamline education around commercial cannabis, CEG offers a comprehensive digital learning platform that allows users access to informed discourse around everything cannabis.

The time for cannabis is now, but we must not miss out on the urgent and life-saving opportunity to re-write the wrongs of a harsh globalized system which supports and profits off of human exploitation and modern slavery.

As we move into 2021, CEG will be further driving healthy discourse around modern slavery in existing global supply chains while highlighting the urgency of parallel risks cannabis will face. To watch the full Oxford University webinar visit [cannabiseducationguild.com/recordings](https://cannabiseducationguild.com/recordings).

Cannabis Education Guild, written by: McGregor Abbott